mentioned at (i) and (ii) above are to be delivered within 72 hours after the day of posting.

(iv) Letters within a State are to be delivered within 48-72 hourse after the day of posting.

(v) Letters within a District are to be delivered within 48 hours after the day of posting.

These broad norms are adhered to only when mail carrying trains, planes, buses and other transport run to their published schedule.

Remedial steps are taken where systemic delays are noticed and field officials are instructed to closely monitor transmission and delivery of mails.

Strcngth of Postal Staff in Delhi

1709. SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI: DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that postal employees in Delhi were in a go-slow' undeclared strike recently; if so, what is the duration and main grievances of the employees;

(b) what is the present strength of postal employees for Delhi during each of last three years and the staff strength added each year; and

(c) whether Government have taken note of press reports to the effect that lakhs of letters and cards are not delivered in Delhi and are destroyed; and if so, the steps taken to prevent this practice?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) The Railway Mail Service (RMS) staff of Delhi Circle resorted to refusal of overtime duty from October 17, 1995. The agitation was called off on November 3, 1995. The reasons for agitation by the RMS staff in Delhi was non-payment of overtime allowance because of non-availability of funds.

(b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(c) The Government has taken due note of the press reports in this connection. Special steps were taken to clear accumulated mail by streamlining the functioning of mail offices, strengthening sorting work in Post Offices, and by effective supervision and monitoring. There were no instances of destruction of mails.

Average Output of Sorting Assistants

1710. SHRI GAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state the average output of Sorting Assistants in a span of duty of 8 hours including half an hour rest in each RMS Division in Maharashtra Circle, Delhi Circle, West Bengal Circle in any week in December, 1994 and May, 1994?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): The average output of sorting assistants in a span of duty of 8 hours including half-an-hour rest in a week of six working days is 47,700.

Set to Set Transfer in Postal Circles

1711. SHRI GAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Circular dated 27th February, 1991 bearing No. 39-S91-D was issued by the Department of Posts on the question set to set transfer; and

(b) if so, whether it was implemented by RMS Division in Maharashtra, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Delhi Postal Circles; if so, what was the finding in each Circle?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) All Postal Circles including

Maharashtra, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh and Delhi took effective steps in containing set-to-set transfer of mails as directed in the Circular under consideration.

Licence to unemployed youth to operate Mini Post Offices in Andhra Pradesh

1712. SHRI MOHAN BASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Postal Department in Andhra Pradesh will give licence to unemployed Graduates to operate Mini Post Offices;

(b) whether it is also a fact that there is a great potential to use the unemployed youth in Andhra Pradesh; and

(c) if so how Government propose to study the potentiality of the educated unemployed youth in the State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) No, Sir. There is no such proposal.

(b) and (c) Does not arise in view of (a) above.

ISD/STD/PCO Booths in Tirupati and Tirumala

1713. SHRI MOHAN BABU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of ISD/STD/Public Phone Booths under operation in Tirupati and Tirumala in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) the number of pending applications for ISD/5TD/PCOs by unemployed youth in Tirupati and Tirumala; and

(c) how Andhra Pradesh Telecom proposes to meet this demand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) There are 135 and 12 ISD/5TD/Public Phone Booths under operation in Tirupati and Tirumala, respectively, in Andhra Pradesh.

(b) No applications are pending at Tirumala 110 sanctioned cases are pending execution at Tirupati.

(c) the pending demand at Tirupati would be met after expension of the exchange before March '96 subject to availability of equipment and funds.

Cellular Mobile Telephone Service

1714. SHRI TARA CHARAN MAJUMDAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether provisions of cellular mobile telephone service in Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan has been authorised to third highest bidder;

(b) if so, the details thereof with background;

(c) whether Government propose to provide similar service to Assam also in the near future; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Rajasthan circle has been offered to M/s. Hexacom India Ltd., the third highest bidder as M/s. Modicom Network Pvt. Ltd., the highest bidden in three Circles viz., Rajasthan, Punjab and Karnataka, had limited networth, hence, the company was eligible for only two circles. An option was given to the Company to choose any two Circles. The Company choose Karnataka & Punjab Circles. Accordingly, Rajasthan Circle has been offered to the third highest bidder. Due to limitation of three Circles to any single bidder company, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh Circles have been offered to the third highest bidder in those Circles. Mt. US West-BPL was the highest bidder in Kerala and Tamil Nadu Circles. The company was the second highest bidder in Maharashtra Gujarat & Andhra Pradesh Circles. The Company was offered Kerala & Tamilnadu in which